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DECOLONIZATION AT HOME

THE EDITORS

GUERRILLAS AND "PEASANT REPUBLICS" IN COLOMBIA

ADOLFO GILLY

Freedom Under Capitalism and Socialism

LEO HUBERMAN

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

It is with a profound sense of sorrow and loss that we record the death from Hodgkin's disease at the age of 63 of Gertrude Huberman, on September 16th in New York City.

The youngest of 12 children, Gert came to the United States from Russia at the age of 3. The family settled in Newark where she attended public schools, graduating from Newark Normal School in 1922. She and Leo who had been friends and classmates since childhood were married in 1925.

After teaching for several years in the New Jersey public schools, Gert became bookkeeper for the League for Industrial Democracy in the period 1929-1933. Later she served as supervisor of nursery school education on Long Island for the WPA. These practical experiences in accounting and management were of the greatest importance to MR in its early years. Gert joined us on the staff of the magazine from the outset and remained active until a few weeks before her death. Her knowledge, patience, care, and attention to detail enabled us to solve many problems and to avoid many others that often beset new and inexperienced undertakings. Her death represents an irreparable loss to all of us personally, and MR will come through relatively unscathed only because she did so much to put its records and accounts on a sound basis.

(continued on inside back cover)

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DECOLONIZATION AT HOME

A riot, according to Webster, is "wanton or unrestrained behavior, uproar, tumult." No doubt there was plenty of that in Los Angeles in the four or five days beginning August 11, 1965. But to use the term riot to describe the entirety of what happened, as the press has generally done, is to point away from the direction in which the meaning of these events must be sought. For what is of crucial importance is not the wanton or unrestrained behavior of the residents of the Watts district, however much or little of it there may have been, but the clearly defined patterns which their acts traced out. These patterns reveal underlying causes and motives and foreshadow the shape of things to come.

What may perhaps be described as the classic form of the race riot in the United States arose out of the aggression of whites against Negroes encroaching on what the whites considered to be their exclusive areas of employment or housing. An entirely different form of conflict appeared with the formation of Negro ghettos in the big cities of the North and West. From the beginning these ghettos have been ruled from outside by white governments acting in the main through the police in the role of an occupying army. The analogy with the situation in the colonies of the European imperialist powers is exact. In the words of Frantz Fanon:

> In the colonial countries . . . the policeman and the soldier, by their immediate presence and their frequent and direct action maintain contact with the native and advise him by means of rifle-butts and napalm not to budge. It is obvious here that the agents of government speak the language of pure force. The intermediary does not lighten the oppression, nor seek to hide the domination; he shows them up and puts them into practice with the clear conscience of an upholder of the peace; yet he is the

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bringer of violence into the home and into the mind of the native. (*The Wretched of the Earth,* p. 31.)

Fanon shows how this situation generates in the native intense feelings of bitterness and hatred against the whole system of oppression of which he is the victim, and especially against its immediate armed agents. His reactions are complex and undergo a characteristic evolution. In the early stages, he devises appropriate forms of evasion and sabotage (which to the oppressor appear as laziness, shiftiness, stupidity, dishonesty, etc.). He vents his anger and aggressiveness against his own fellows (to the oppressor this appears to prove a predisposition to senseless violence). Gradually, partly as the result of his own experience and partly inspired by the example of others, he takes up the struggle against the oppressors themselves and in so doing makes himself over into a new man, both in his own eyes and in the eyes of the world.

> Decolonization never takes place unnoticed, for it influences individuals and modifies them fundamentally. It transforms spectators crushed with their inessentiality into privileged actors, with the grandiose glare of history's floodlights upon them. It brings a natural rhythm into existence, introduced by new men, and with it a new language and a new humanity. Decolonization is the veritable creation of new men. But this creation owes nothing of its legitimacy to any supernatural power; the "thing" which has been colonized becomes man during the same process by which it frees itself. (*Ibid.,* p. 30.)

Any one who examines with care the reports of what happened in Los Angeles can hardly help being struck by the extent to which the struggle there resembles the struggle of the native against colonialism as described and analyzed by Frantz Fanon. There was no indiscriminate fighting between Negroes and whites (as in the native sections of colonial cities, there are very few white residents of Watts, and for obvious reasons whites kept out during the fighting) and none at all among Negroes. A report by Walter Rugaber in the *New York Times* of August 17th quotes an employed Negro worker as saying that he "had been afraid—'Yes, sir, afraid'—while they [the disturbances] were in progress. But he was afraid of the white Los Angeles police, not his fellow Negroes in the street."

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Available casualty figures, still very sketchy at the time of writing, reveal the basis for this pattern of fear. According to *Newsweek* (August 30), "Twenty-nine of 36 fatalities were Negro. Most were shot by guardsmen and police during their drive to restore order." And the evidence is overwhelming that all Negroes regardless of their degree of involvement were regarded as enemies by the police. An incident related by Walter Rugaber, involving the employed Negro worker already quoted, is typical:

> Shorty, who did not want to get his name in the newspapers, gave voice to a bitterness often heard from Negroes, including the sober and respectable, in the riot area.
>
> Yesterday morning, after some of the worst rioting, he was out shopping for milk. It was just one more Sunday morning to him, and he called to friends as he passed by in his automobile.
>
> Suddenly, he said, no fewer than six police cars forced him to the curb, pulled him from the vehicle, and began to search him. Shorty threw his arms into the air and flung them against a wall to demonstrate what he was forced to do.
>
> He said one officer cursed him and screamed, "You better get home or we're going to kill you before the day's gone."

There is perhaps no better way to lay bare the real nature of the conflict in Los Angeles than to ask a simple question: What would have happened if the police, and later the National Guard, instead of moving in to restore "law and order" had stayed out of Watts altogether? Would there have been a wholesale slaughter of the inhabitants? Would the whole area have been burned to the ground?

Of course not. As we have already seen, most of the casualties resulted precisely from police and Guard action. And there is no reason to suppose that the pattern of violence against property would have been different from what it was if there had been no attempt at interference by the armed forces of the state. To quote the August 30th issue of *Newsweek* again:

> During the height of the rioting it seemed like an indiscriminate rampage. But after order was restored, the testimony of the streets was otherwise. There was abundant evidence of systematic and selective pillage. Negro and Mexican-American homes adjoining business streets were untouched and so were Negro (and

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occasionally Chinese) businesses that proclaimed their identity with hastily daubed "Blood," or "Blood Brother," or "Soul Brother" signs. White businesses were looted everywhere, but certain enterprises seemed especially marked for the torch, among them a supermarket chain suspected of selling tired foodstuffs cast off by its outlets in white neighborhoods.

An unpublished account by a Los Angeles resident with close friends in the Watts area, transmitted to us by an MR subscriber, makes the same general point and adds revealing details:

> The majority of the stores destroyed were chain stores or big stores. Only the small stores whose owners were notorious were touched. Of course the slogan of the revolution was "Burn, baby, burn!" which was sung out and shouted by the hundreds of people standing around watching the buildings burn and in many cases blocking the way to fire engines, doing everything they could to prevent them coming in to put out the fires—throwing bricks, bottles, etc. Very few of the stores owned by blacks were touched, nor any houses or residential streets. About 200 young people came down Wilmington Avenue across the street from our friends' house, set fire to the market and liquor store, and then crossed the street to talk to the people who had all come out on their porches. They were very polite, said "Good evening, we want you to know that we will not hurt any of you or bother you—we are just giving Whitey what's coming to him."

The conclusion seems inescapable that there would have been far fewer casualties, and it might even be argued that there would have been less property destruction, if the police and Guard had kept hands off.

So why didn't they? Isn't it the duty of the police to protect life and property? And if the best way to do it is to lay off, why not lay off?

The answer of course is that the primary function of the police is *not* to protect specific lives and specific pieces of property but rather to protect the existing *system* of property with its corollary social relations. If carrying out this primary function means sacrificing lives and endangering the material embodiment of property, that's just too bad: the system comes first regardless of the cost. The logic is precisely the same as that which leads the United States to pursue a policy in Viet-

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nam which aims to protect that country's "freedom" even if the result is quite literally to destroy all its inhabitants and material wealth. That Negro aggression against, and/or appropriation of, the property of absentee white owners (defenders of the existing social order, of course, call it "looting") does indeed constitute a threat to the system should be obvious. If the Negroes in Watts can get away with it, so can the Negroes in other cities. And if Negroes, then poor whites. Eruptions of this kind always have a chain-reaction potential and must therefore be suppressed with the utmost vigor by the beneficiaries and upholders of the present system.

It is this threat-to-the-system aspect of the Los Angeles affair that lends a certain justification to calling it a revolution (as in the unpublished report quoted above). And yet in another sense it is misleading to speak of a revolution, or even a rehearsal for a revolution. The aim of the participants was certainly not to seize power, even on a purely local level. It was to "give Whitey what's coming to him"—to retaliate for all the misery, indignity, and humiliation inflicted on the inhabitants of the ghetto by whites and their rotten system. This was an easily understandable and, as the event showed, fully attainable goal. Not only did absentee white owners lose tens of millions of dollars worth of property; even more important, whites (and middle-class Negroes) in the Los Angeles area, and far beyond, got the scare of their lives. It was no empty rhetoric when *Newsweek* spoke of "a frightened nation": millions of hitherto complacent whites suddenly awoke to the fact that those who have been predicting precisely such explosions were deadly serious. In Watts, "The Fire Next Time" came true.

These are no small achievements, and they make nonsense of the assertion, repeated *ad nauseam* in the press and over the airwaves, that the violence in Watts was senseless and irrational. Not only did it serve to relieve perfectly justified feelings of anger and frustration; by shocking the white oligarchy in this country into at least partial realization of the true state of affairs it may quite possibly do more to win meaningful concessions for the poverty-stricken Negro (*and* white) masses than any amount of nonviolent protest.

But the real significance of the Los Angeles explosion is to

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be sought elsewhere. We must recall the words of Frantz Fanon quoted above: "The 'thing' which has been colonized becomes man during the process by which it frees itself." And again: "The colonized man finds his freedom in and through violence." (*The Wretched of the Earth,* p. 67.) While the evidence is still sketchy, there are strong indications that the explosion in Los Angeles has had precisely such a humanizing and liberating effect on the ghetto dwellers of that city. "We have come to life," Walter Rugaber quotes a Watts mechanic as saying, "we're not going back to slavery." (*New York Times,* August 17.) And *Newsweek* (August 30) reports, with what appears to be a mixture of admiration and surprise, that "When the shooting was over many of the same young gang hoodlums who had been on the rampage just days before were conscientiously at work distributing government surplus food to needy Negro adults and children." Harry Nelson, a *Washington Post* reporter, interviewed a Negro psychiatrist who heads a mental clinic in the Watts area. Here are excerpts from his account as reproduced in the *York Gazette and Daily* of August 23rd:

> "They feel morally right about what they have done," said Dr. Harold W. Jones. "They look upon it as a revolt rather than a riot and therefore subject to a different value system.
>
> "They see their insurrection as an opportunity to achieve dignity and self-respect. It is as if they are saying, 'It's better to be feared than to be held in contempt.' ". . .
>
> He said it is true that the riot had no leaders, but it is not true that the Negroes in that community have no leaders.
>
> The psychiatrist sees the riot not only as a rebellion against whites, but as an attempt to give Negro leadership a bargaining position it now lacks with white authorities.
>
> The rioters, he believes, shared a common motivation for their actions—a determination to show their strength by using violence—and in this sense their actions were not without direction.
>
> He also says that the looting and burning were not merely expressions of uncontrolled passion, but that they were controlled in the sense that they were directed chiefly at merchants who the people feel are exploiting the neighborhood without contributing to the Negro good. . . .
>
> Dr. Jones said the Negroes now feel more confident about themselves and their power and scoff at pronouncements that the city authorities have won the battle.

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Could there be more striking confirmation of Frantz Fanon's dictum that "colonized man finds his freedom in and through violence"? The truth is that he has no other means of expressing his manhood than to oppose his own violence to the intrinsic violence of his oppressors. The alternative is continued submission and degradation. The Negroes of Watts have rejected that alternative once and for all, and the result could well be a turning point in American history.

All the other ghettos of the nation were watching Los Angeles with intense interest and passionate sympathy. One observer remarked that Harlem was like a bomb, ready to explode: all it would have taken was for a cop to step on one Negro's toe. A major outburst did occur in Chicago when a fire truck knocked over a lamp post killing a Negro woman; and there were lesser repercussions as far away as Hartford, Connecticut, and Springfield, Massachusetts. That a much more general rising of Negroes failed to occur in August was in all probability due to the fact that the new "decolonization" phase of the Negro struggle, as distinct from the traditional struggle for civil rights, is still only in its infancy. As a new leadership develops, as channels of communication are opened, and as organizational links are established, a far greater degree of coordination can be expected in the aggressive actions of the future.

The question of the emergence of a new leadership is now of crucial importance. Los Angeles conclusively proved that neither Negro politicos attached to the old-line political parties nor the leaders of the established civil rights organizations have any influence in the urban ghettos. "On paper," *Newsweek* (August 30) remarked, "Negroes are well represented in city officialdom: a Congressman, three City Councilmen (there were none just two years ago), two Assemblymen, and a member of the Board of Education. But of them all, only one, Assemblyman Mervyn Dymally, lives in Watts." These tools of the white power structure made no attempt to play a role in the August events: their bankruptcy was apparent even to themselves. Martin Luther King did try to play a role, and he quickly discovered that prestige won in the narrowly reformist struggle against the Jim Crow system in the South counts for nothing

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in the ghetto. *Newsweek's* account of King's abject failure in Los Angeles is good reporting, worth quoting at length:

In all the history of the Negro revolt, no single leader has moved more men to disciplined, nonviolent action in the name of God and the cause of equality than Martin Luther King. Yet he had barely set foot in riot-shattered Watts last week when he learned, with face-slapping force, the depth of the chasm that divides him no less than white Americans from the angry black ghetto. He came as the marshall of the Negro's victories in the South, but, as he drove into Watts under heavy guard, a Negro teen-ager said dourly: "Aw, they're just sending another nigger down here to tell us what we need." He came to offer hope to the ghetto, but his welcome was a mocking jeer from an onlooker: " 'I had a dream, I had a dream'—hell, we don't need no damn dreams. We want jobs."

The Negro leadership scarcely needed the evidence of King's pilgrimage to confirm a single, shattering fact of the Los Angeles riot: that the orthodox civil rights movement has not reached the black masses in the wilderness of the urban North. . . . "Civil rights organizations have failed," CORE's James Farmer confessed wanly. "No one had any roots in the ghetto in Watts.". . . When the blowup came in Watts few Negro leaders other than King saw any real point in going to the scene. "I wouldn't feel right," said the National Urban League's Whitney Young, "unless I could tell them, 'Stop, I got some jobs for you.' "

And King might as well have stayed home. He held one audience with local Negro leaders, who had three minutes apiece to tell him what was wrong in Watts. The composite answer: everything. He managed a meeting with Mayor Sam Yorty . . . and Police Chief William Parker. . . . After two hours, King left City Hall in dismay: "I really don't see a willingness here to do anything."

The visit to Watts was a worse misadventure still. Inside a faded, second-floor meeting hall, King was quickly surrounded by 300 angry Negroes.

"The people don't feel bad about what happened," one soliloquized. "They had nothing to lose. They don't have jobs, decent homes. What else could they do?"

"Burn, baby, burn," someone whooped, to a chorus of laughing applause.

One heckler was ushered out, and King finally started his speech. Once he began a sentence, "We must join hands . . ." "And burn!" someone shrilled, and the crowd laughed again. King pressed on: "You are all God's children. There will be a better tomorrow . . ." "When, dammit, when?" a spectator roared. King

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finally got the crowd under attentive control, but he wound up canceling other stops in the riot zone for "security reasons."

Watts, clearly, was a battleground lost. The Negro leadership could only deplore the rioting, approve the use of whatever force necessary to put it down and press the search for answers.

A more appropriate epitaph would be hard to devise: "They could only approve the use of whatever force necessary to put it down." Right in front of our eyes the Negro leadership of the past is being transformed into the *anti*-Negro leadership of the future.

And the new Negro leadership of the future?

It has not yet emerged into the full light of day, but there are plenty of signs that it is rapidly evolving and that its attitude and outlook will represent a sharp break with the past. The unpublished report cited earlier comments on this aspect of the Los Angeles affair in the following terms:

> There are many incidents and impressions that convince us that this was not a howling, leaderless mob as the power structure is trying to maintain. There's no doubt that it started spontaneously, but the soil was so ready it was almost as if everything had been rehearsed and prepared. It seemed leaderless to the whites because the respectable leaders were out of it altogether. But you could feel leadership and organization—not fully developed or coordinated, not with high-flown worked-out programs—but there nevertheless. And although the white community doesn't recognize the leaders yet, they will have to deal with them as time goes on.

At this stage one can only speculate on the strategies and tactics which this new leadership will develop in the course of the struggle. But one thing seems absolutely clear: it will be extremely aggressive and it will not shrink from the use of violence, the natural weapon of the oppressed. A clue to its character can perhaps be gathered from the rapid rise in the South of the Deacons for Defense and Justice, a semi-secret organization dedicated to countering white terror by all necessary means. In principle, the Deacons are no different from the movement led by Robert Williams in Monroe, North Carolina, several years ago. The fact that Williams failed and was driven out of the country on a trumped-up kidnapping charge, while the Deacons have become solidly established in a wide area of the deep South, simply shows that the times have changed and

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that what was premature in the late 1950's and early 1960's is very much on the agenda today. In its issue of September 4th, the *National Guardian* published an interview by its correspondent William Price with Charles R. Sims, a leading Deacon and president of the organization's Bogalusa, Louisiana, chapter. Here is one of the question-and-answer sequences:

Q. With the recent outbreak of violence in Los Angeles, and also in Chicago, would you have any comment about the meaning of that or how it might have been different if there had been Deacons in Los Angeles or Chicago?

A. Well, first of all, to be frank, I don't know if it would have been any different with Deacons there. But one thing could have made a difference, is the right type of leadership. All these people that's been killed in Los Angeles, I think is dying useless. With the right type of leadership and the right type of planning you wouldn't have these many killings. But the only thing I can see, if the Deacons had been started out there, the way these people been fighting, it would be revolution in California. Because the Deacons don't give any ground—they take it.

One can be pretty sure that the activists in Los Angeles were as aware of the deficiencies of leadership and planning from which the revolt suffered as was Charles Sims, viewing the scene from thousands of miles away. And one can also be pretty sure that they—and their brothers in Chicago and New York and Detroit and scores of other ghettos all over the country—are already engaged in the task of remedying these deficiencies, very much in the spirit of Charles Sims and the Deacons of the deep South. From now on they are less and less likely to give ground and more and more likely to take it.

What will be the objectives of the "decolonization" phase of the struggle now opening?

In general terms the answer is clear: freedom, dignity, self-respect, and the respect of others—the whole complex which in the colonies proper makes up the goal of genuine national independence. In this sense, there can be no doubt that the Negro struggle in the United States is in the process of being transformed into a nationalist struggle in the deepest meaning of the term. And yet it is equally clear that an oppressed population which is increasingly concentrated in a multitude of widely dis-

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persed ghettos cannot set itself the goal of nationhood in the straightforward sense that, for example, the Vietnamese people have been fighting for nationhood during the past two decades. The Negro struggle in the United States is bound to be more complicated and to display distinctive phases and characteristics stemming from the unique historical situation in which American Negroes find themselves. Evidence on which to base an analysis of these phases and characteristics is not yet avaliable, but there does seem to be an inherent logic in the situation which can be expected to assert itself in the relatively near future. All of history shows that a group can achieve freedom, dignity, self-respect, and the respect of others only by acquiring power. If American Negroes cannot at this stage aspire to national power, the same cannot be said of power in the ghettos themselves. This is a goal which is at once definable, worth fighting for, and potentially attainable. It is likely to become increasingly the key objective of the new Negro leadership now taking shape.

Not that the white power structure is going to relinquish its control over the ghetto without a struggle. The right to exploit the ghetto at will is too valuable, and in addition it will be clear to the ruling whites that if Negroes attain power within the ghetto their next step will be to reach out with ever greater confidence for more power outside the ghetto. A real war is beginning, one which we described over a year ago (MR, May 1964) as "The Colonial War at Home." It will be a tough, long war in which both sides will suffer heavy casualties. Out of it will be born a new Negro and a radically different United States.

There are those, including perhaps most people on the Left in this country, who believe that the colonized Negro is bound to lose this war; that the whites, being in a vast majority and disposing over infinitely more fire power, can simply move in and physically suppress the Negro revolt. Leaders will be arrested or assassinated; militants will be herded into jails and concentration camps; where the police fail, ghettos will be occupied by troops as has already happened in Los Angeles. Eventually, so the argument runs, the will to resist will be

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broken. Peace will return—perhaps the peace of the grave, but peace all the same.

In reality matters are not so simple. As experience all over the world has proved—in lands as far apart as China and Algeria, Cuba and Vietnam—a colonized people which once embarks in deadly earnest on a struggle for national liberation cannot be beaten and tortured into submission. Physical annihilation is theoretically possible; but in practice it offers no way out to the colonizing power, and in fact efforts directed to that end sooner or later create more problems than they solve. In particular, the American ruling class, seeking to hold and rule a world-wide empire of predominantly colored peoples cannot afford to annihilate its own colored minority. And short of annihilation, this seemingly all-powerful ruling class has no choice but to seek some kind of political settlement with its slaves in revolt. As Fanon has pointed out:

> Today the governments of colonized countries know very well that it is extremely dangerous to deprive the masses of their leaders; for then the people, unbridled, fling themselves into *jacqueries,* mutinies, and "brutish murders." The masses give free rein to their "bloodthirsty instincts" and force colonialism to free their leaders. . . . So we see that all parties are aware of the power of such violence and that the question is not always to reply to it by a greater violence, but rather to see how to relax the tension. (*The Wretched of the Earth,* p. 57.)

Violence and counter-violence, repression and retaliation, negotiation and compromise—all will be integral and recurring features of the colonial war at home which is now getting under way and to which no end is even remotely in sight.

In the meantime, it is important never to forget that the colonial war at home is essentially a part of the world-wide revolt of the colonized peoples against all forms of capitalist-imperialist exploitation and oppression. During the height of the Los Angeles explosion, the evangelist Billy Graham was quoted on a radio newscast as saying that if 40 or 50 other American cities erupted in similar fashion it would require the whole armed might of the United States to keep them under control. We do not know whether he was correctly quoted, or whether the military estimate is realistic, but we do know that the remark

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expresses a profound truth. The colonial war at home can, and undoubtedly will, vastly increase the strain on United States resources, above all manpower, which the colonial war abroad is already imposing. Ultimately, there can be little doubt, the strain will reach the breaking point.

(September 10, 1965)

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FREEDOM UNDER CAPITALISM AND SOCIALISM

BY LEO HUBERMAN

On that never-to-be-forgotten day, the inhabitants of the city were stunned by the pronouncement of a dictator. Some 3500 people, about a quarter of the working population of the city, suddenly learned that they could work until the end of the year and then—no more jobs. The mills were to be closed by order of the dictator.

The moment you hear that word dictator, you probably think of any one of a number of countries, except your own; yet the event I have just described took place here in our own country, in the New England town of Nashua, New Hampshire, U.S.A., whose people have long boasted that theirs is the greatest democracy in the world. Surely there could not be any dictatorship there?

But there was. There was the dictatorship of private ownership of the means of production. There was the dictatorship of Textron, Inc., whose owners, not elected by the people of New Hampshire, responsible to no one but themselves, made a decision affecting the life of every person in the city of Nashua. Concerned only with their own advantage, the owners of Textron decided that they would shut down the mills in Nashua and move South where labor was cheaper—and profits larger.

Many of the 3500 workers in the Nashua Mills had worked all their lives in the textile industry and knew no other trade. What was going to happen to them? That was no concern of Textron.

Few disasters so great as the sudden loss of employment for one quarter of the working people can hit an unsuspecting community. What was going to happen to Nashua? That was no concern of Textron.

This is the complete text of "The Fritz Pappenheim Memorial Lecture" given on May 1, 1965 at Yale University under the auspices of the Yale Socialist Union.

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Was it in the interest of the United States of America to have an industry located in one region of the country move to another region? That was no concern of Textron.

In true dictator fashion, with no discussion of the question with the people directly affected, and with no regard for the well-being of the workers, the city, or the nation, Textron had made its decision. Nashua, New Hampshire was to be added to the long list of once thriving cities transformed into a chronically depressed area—by the arbitrary order of a group of absentee owners concerned only with the hunt for profits.

The case of Nashua is a dramatic, but by no means unique, example of the absence of economic government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." The *New York Times*, on March 16, just a month and a half ago, began a dispatch from Yonkers, New York with these words: "The Otis Elevator Company, which is the largest employer in this city, said today it would eliminate from its local payroll 26 percent of the 2100 employees. Efforts of state officials to alter the decision have failed."

When Charles Wilson made his famous remark, "What's good for General Motors is good for the country," he was ridiculed by many people who were not themselves aware of the fact—or else did not relish having it stated so baldly—that the capitalist system is, indeed, based on the premise that the self-interest of the businessman is sure to benefit the nation; that if only individuals are left free to make as much profit as they can, the whole of society must be better off; that the best way to get things done is to let capitalists make as large a profit as possible out of doing them and, as a certain by-product of the process, the needs of the people will be served.

This proposition is, of course, definitely not true—certainly not all the time. The interest of the profit-seeker may or may not coincide with the interests of society, and frequently they clash. It would be to the interest of society to label packages of cigarettes "Poison," and to prohibit cigarette advertising in the press and on TV, but that would hurt the profits of the tobacco interests so, to date, the required legislation is not forthcoming. The benefits to the people of the United States of TVA have been proven beyond any doubt, so the question naturally

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arises, why not an Ohio Valley Authority and a Missouri Valley Authority and a host of others to help the inhabitants of those regions in the same way? Why not, indeed? Because such projects in regional planning cut into the profits of the public utility companies, coal companies, and railroads. "The businessman's place in the economy of nature," Thorstein Veblen reminds us, "is to 'make money,' not to produce goods."

In a country that prides itself on being a democracy, a small group of men, not elected by the people, have in their hands the power to make decisions affecting the economic welfare of the nation. In a country that believes in representative government, a small group of self-appointed dictators decides what American citizens may or may not have.

The case of Textron illustrates the important fact that while Americans have won a measure of political democracy they have not attained a semblance of economic democracy. Every hour of every day decisions affecting if and when they shall work, what goods or services they shall or shall not obtain, are made by private individuals whose names never appear on the ballot the people mark in their voting booths. Americans—not all of them, as the registration drive for Negroes in the South amply proves—have the right to elect the men and women who make the political decisions affecting the country, but they do not have the right to elect the men and women who make the equally important economic decisions affecting every aspect of their lives.

This economic dictatorship, so dangerous to the welfare of the country in time of peace, can become a threat to its very existence in time of war. Regardless of the gravity of the crisis, the economic dictators insist that profits come before duty—and they are in a position to make the country pay their price. This is not an unfounded charge; it is confirmed by the experience of the United States in both World War I and World War II. A Temporary National Economic Committee report, published in 1941, tells the story: "Speaking bluntly, the Government and the public are 'over a barrel' when it comes to dealing with business in time of war or other crisis. Business refuses to work, except on terms which it dictates. It controls the natural resources, the liquid assets, the strategic position in

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the country's economic structure, and its technical equipment and knowledge of processes.

"The experience of World War I, now apparently being repeated, indicates that business will use this control only if it is 'paid properly.' In effect, this is blackmail, not too fully disguised. . . . It is in such a situation that the question arises: What price patriotism?"

Imagine the outcry that would arise if soldiers, following the example of the business czars, insisted on a raise in pay before they obeyed the order to attack!

The Temporary National Economic Committee of the United States Senate, which characterized the behavior of our economic dictators in time of war as "blackmail," called attention to the fact that our so-called system of "free private enterprise" is not that at all—it is, in fact, largely a system in which economic power is highly concentrated, a system of monopoly, described by TNEC in these words: "A more nearly perfect mechanism for making the poor poorer and the rich richer could scarcely be devised. . . . We know that most of the wealth and income of the country is owned by a few large corporations, that these corporations in turn are owned by an infinitesimally small number of people, and that the profits from the operation of these corporations go to a very small group."

That Senate report was published in 1941 and today, 24 years later, the statistics indicate that the good things of life still flow in a never-ending stream to a small, privileged rich class; while frightening insecurity, degrading poverty, and inequality of opportunity are the lot of the large, unprivileged poor class.

Harry Magdoff gave you the pertinent figures this morning—in our "affluent society" 66 million Americans live in poverty or deprivation. Two weeks ago, on April 20, the *New York Times* ran an editorial citing Welfare Department figures showing that the number of children growing up on the public relief rolls was rising. "The cycle of inherited want in this city is becoming a disastrous upward spiral," said the *Times*. "300,000 New York children are living on public assistance in this most prosperous year in America's history."

At his news conference on April 2, a month ago, President

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Johnson reported that the unemployment rate in the country had fallen. He said: "Good as it is, 4.7 percent unemployment in our economy is equal to, or greater than, the individual population of at least two thirds of our states. . . . And that many is too many."

On the state of education in the country, the President said:

> How many young lives have been wasted; how many entire families now live in misery; how much talent has this great powerful nation lost because America has failed to give all of our children a chance to learn. . . .
>
> Last year almost one out of every three of all draftees were rejected by the armed services because they could not read or write at the eighth grade level. . . . Today as I speak . . . nearly 54 million have not finished high school. This is a shocking waste of human resources.

Right, Mr. President. This is, indeed, a shocking waste of human resources—this poverty, this degradation, this illiteracy, this American way of life, for so many of our people. And equally shocking is the way of life for those whose property, power, and privilege stem from their ownership of the means of production in this capitalist system.

We get a glimpse of what life is like for those on the upper rung of the economic ladder, in an article in the *New York Times* Magazine Section on December 13 of last year—just before Christmas. The article was concerned with the problem of what to give to "those overprivileged people who are apt to be skipped by Santa simply because they have everything. Luckily the plight of the pampered," the author says with tongue in cheek, "has not gone unconsidered by stores with a social conscience."

> For the night before Christmas, a man of feeling (and ready cash) might send a lady a sincere bouquet—of red silk roses handmade in Paris, $250 the dozen from Flowers Unlimited. An underweight girl might be even more pleased by Plumbridge's 10-lb. assortment of nourishing candy packed in a Tiffany glass bowl, $350. And, as stuffing for a sheer little stocking, Kent of London's 9-kt. gold-backed brush for furs, $450 (special order) from Saks Fifth Avenue; Arthur King's $10,000 diamond-stoppered perfume bottle carved from a single emerald, and/or Neiman-Marcus's

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diamond-emerald necklace, a bibelot so dainty it barely whispers its $125,000 price. . . .

To round out the gift picture, there are the warm little things that make a house a home. What can give that special glow to a room better than wall-to-wall mink carpeting? For $600 a square yard, furrier Georges Kaplan is even prepared to install it on Christmas Eve. M. Kaplan has also come up with a practical notion for closets: clothes hangers covered in durable chinchilla, at $175 a piece. To brighten up the children's bathroom, there's Sherle Wagner's jeweled basin set—a pair of 24-kt. gold-plated faucets set with semiprecious malachite, $495.

Now obviously, there must be some method whereby this set of property relations, so advantageous to the few and so disadvantageous to the many, is maintained. There must be some agency with power to see to it that this system of social and economic domination by the wealthy minority over the laboring majority is preserved.

In the conflict between those who have private property in the means of production and those who have not, the haves find in the state an indispensable weapon against the have-nots.

In slave society the state power was used in the interests of the slave owners. In feudal society the state power was used in the interests of the feudal lords and feudal church. In capitalist society the state power is used in the interests of the capitalists.

That the state is a weapon of the ruling class was plain to Adam Smith as long ago as 1776. In his famous book, *The Wealth of Nations,* Smith wrote: "Civil government, so far as it is instituted for the security of property is in reality instituted for the defense of the rich against the poor or of those who have some property against those who have none at all."

The class that rules economically—that owns the means of production—also rules politically. The form of government makes no difference. Adam Smith, for example, was a native of England which was a monarchy. Here in the United States we never had a king to rule over us. But Samuel Clesson Allen, Massachusetts minister, teacher, and Congressman, from his experience in this democratic republic, came, in the 1830's, to much the same conclusions about the role of the state as did Smith: "What have governments been, and what are they now, but the combinations of the rich and the powerful to increase their

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riches and extended their power? . . . What have the laboring class to expect from their justice or their charity? What from a government in their control? . . . It is in the nature of things that government will always adapt its policy, be the theory of its constitution what it may, to the interests and aims of the predominating class."

Those members of the laboring class who, unlike Allen, thought of the government as being impartial, as standing above classes, soon learned the facts of life. They found that a government in control of "the rich and the powerful" was bound to make laws which were in the interests of the rich and the powerful.

"Whenever the legislature," observed Adam Smith, "attempts to regulate the differences between masters and their workmen, its counsellors are always the masters."

It is not at all surprising that the law-makers look for counsel to the "masters" of Smith's day—the capitalists of our day. It would be surprising indeed if they didn't, since, by and large, it is the capitalists who put them into their seats of power.

The capitalists pay the campaign funds and therefore they control the election machinery. Seldom is a person nominated, let alone elected, who does not meet with the approval of the men who put up the money to swing the election.

It is true that in a democracy like the United States, the people vote the respective candidates into office. They do have a choice of Democrat X or Republican Y. But that is never a choice between a candidate who is on one side of the class war and a candidate who is on the other side.* There is little basic difference in attitude toward the system of private property relations between the candidates of the major parties. What differences do exist have to do mainly with variation in emphasis or detail—almost never with fundamentals.

Boiled down to its essentials, the freedom to choose between

* That choice is, of course, offered to the voters by the candidates of some minority parties. But since every powerful organ of propaganda is on the side of Big Business, the likelihood that the people will vote these candidates into office is, in normal times, exceedingly small.

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Democrat X or Republican Y means for the workers merely the freedom to choose which particular representative of the capitalist class will make the laws in Congress in the interests of the capitalist class.

In the mind of one of our greatest Americans there was no doubt that the class that ruled economically also ruled politically. "Suppose you go to Washington and try to get at your Government. You will always find that while you are politely listened to, the men really consulted are the men who have the biggest stake—the big bankers, the big manufacturers, the big masters of commerce, the heads of railroad corporations and of steamship corporations. . . . The masters of the Government of the United States are the combined capitalists and manufacturers of the United States."

This very revealing statement was published in 1913 in the book *The New Freedom* by Woodrow Wilson. The author was in a position to know what he was talking about. He was President of the United States at the time.

My own first inkling of the truth of Wilson's observation came in 1932 when I paid an income tax of $24 and I read in the newspaper that J. P. Morgan paid nothing that year. I've been interested in our tax laws ever since—and believe me, much can be learned about democracy in the United States from a careful study of our tax laws. In a speech in the Senate arguing for tax reform on November 1, 1963, Senator Douglas revealed the fact that there were 15 persons with incomes of more than one million dollars, and 5 persons with gross incomes of more than 5 million dollars "who did not pay a single cent in taxes." These figures, said Senator Douglas, "are shocking when one considers that any worker with a wife and two children who is earning just $100 a week . . . pays about $456 in Federal income taxes."

Understand, I am not suggesting that any of these millionaires who pay no taxes are cheating. On the contrary, my point is that the laws are so designed that they do not have to pay taxes. And if you argue that these cases are not typical, then I commend to your attention an article which appeared in the *New York Times* Magazine Section on April 11, just a few weeks ago, by Senator Gore of Tennessee, entitled "How to be Rich

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Without Paying Taxes." The Senator says: "Now, when examples like these are brought to light by proponents of tax reform, many people dismiss them as untypical; they still believe that we have a progressive system of taxation based on ability to pay. The truth, however, is that the 'typical' taxpayer with an income of one million dollars or more per year regularly pays a smaller percentage of his income in taxes than do some factory workers or teachers."

Now, just as the state uses its power to protect the interests of the capitalist class inside the country, so it uses its armed force to protect those interests outside the country. Military strength does not come cheap. It costs a lot of money—something like 70 percent of the budget is allocated to pay the expenses of past wars and present "national defense." The money that is essential for adequate housing, community services, health, education, and social welfare is always hard to find but there is always plenty for our military needs. That was what Senator Fulbright pointed out in his speech on the Cold War on April 5, 1964:

> There is a most striking paradox in the fact that military budgets of over 50 billion dollars are adopted by the Congress after only perfunctory debate while domestic education and welfare programs involving sums which are mere fractions of the military budget are painstakingly examined and then either considerably reduced or rejected outright.

What Senator Fulbright calls "a most striking paradox" is paradoxical only to those who think of the state as being an impartial agency, above class. To those who recognize that the state is an instrument through which one class establishes its domination over the other class, there is no mystery in the laws made by Congress.

A more pertinent question arises: if the machinery of the state is controlled by the capitalist class and functions in its interest, then how does it ever happen that laws are passed which are of benefit to the working class? How does it ever happen that laws designed to regulate and limit the power of the capitalists ever get on the statute books?

It is true that there are times when such laws are passed.

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This happened, for example, during the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Why?

The state acts on behalf of the non-owners and against the owners when it is forced to do so. It will yield on this or that particular point of conflict because pressure from the working class is so great that concessions must be made, or "law and order" will be endangered, or worse still (from the point of view of the ruling class) revolution may ensue. But the important point to remember is that whatever concessions are won in such periods are confined to the existing property relations. The framework of the capitalist system itself is left untouched. It is always within that framework that concessions are made. The aim of the ruling class is to yield a part in order to save the whole.

All the gains won by the working class during the administration of President Roosevelt—and they were many—did not change the system of private ownership of the means of production. They did not bring the overthrow of one class by another. When Mr. Roosevelt died, the employers were still in their accustomed places, the workers in theirs. Mr. Roosevelt spoke the truth when he said, three years after he took office: "No one in the United States believes more firmly than I do in the system of private business, private property and private profit. . . . It was this Administration which saved the system of private profit and free enterprise after it had been dragged to the brink of ruin."

Freedom, for most Americans, means the right to do and say what they please without interference by the state. The guarantees in the Bill of Rights are specific—freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom from arbitrary arrest. These are precious liberties. They have been essential weapons in the struggle of the working class to better its conditions.

And Americans have, without doubt, enjoyed these freedoms to a greater extent than have the people of many other countries. Nevertheless, it would be foolish to maintain that the rights guaranteed us in the Constitution always exist in fact. The freedoms which are ours on the books are not always ours in real life.

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Thus the House Committee on Un-American Activities vilifies and persecutes citizens in utter disregard of the Bill of Rights.

The FBI is turned into a political police with endless files of secret dossiers on the beliefs and activities of millions of Americans.

The *New York Times* of April 14 reports: "A bid by editors of 13 college newspapers to send student journalists to report stories in Cuba during the Easter vacation has been turned down by the State Department."

Commentators are driven off the air because they are too "liberal"; film and TV writers are blacklisted because of their radical views; members of the Progressive Labor Movement are given jail sentences because of their militancy.

Imprisonment, beatings, torture, and even murder of the heroes, both black and white, who are enlisted in the Negro Freedom Movement, are a common occurrence.

Freedom of the press, with a very few honorable exceptions, has come to mean printing the many lies handed out by government officials with the result that the American people are probably the least informed public in the world on the nature of the terrible happenings in Vietnam.

Freedom of the press is a high-sounding phrase which rings a bell in our ears. We like to think it means the right of free public expression but the Commission on Freedom of the Press, headed by Robert Hutchins, found otherwise: "Protection against government is now not enough to guarantee that a man who has something to say shall have a chance to say it. The owners and managers of the press determine which persons, which facts, which versions of the facts, and which ideas shall reach the public."

The truly noble concept of freedom of the press has been translated by those "owners and managers" into the right to come out bravely and wholeheartedly—for the status quo. This is beautifully illustrated in the headlines in the Paris newspapers reporting the journey of Napoleon across France, on his return from Elba, March 9 to March 22, 1815:

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March 9
THE ANTHROPOPHAGUS HAS QUITTED HIS DEN

March 10
THE CORSICAN OGRE HAS LANDED AT CAPE JUAN

March 11
THE TIGER HAS ARRIVED AT CAP

March 12
THE MONSTER SLEPT AT GRENOBLE

March 13
THE TYRANT HAS PASSED THROUGH LYONS

March 14
THE USURPER IS DIRECTING HIS STEPS TOWARD DIJON

March 18
BONAPARTE IS ONLY SIXTY LEAGUES FROM THE CAPITAL
He has been fortunate enough to escape his pursuers

March 19
BONAPARTE IS ADVANCING WITH RAPID STEPS, BUT HE WILL NEVER ENTER PARIS

March 20
NAPOLEON WILL, TOMORROW, BE UNDER OUR RAMPARTS

March 21
THE EMPEROR IS AT FONTAINEBLEAU

March 22
HIS IMPERIAL AND ROYAL MAJESTY
arrvied yesterday evening at the Tuileries, amid the joyful acclamations of his devoted and faithful subjects

We in the United States tend to think that the whole question of freedom hinges on setting limits to the power of the law to dictate or control what we may say or do. But the absence of coercion, valuable as it undoubtedly is, does not necessarily insure freedom. The mere fact that no law prohibits you from doing something does not mean that you are in a position to do it. You have the right to go to the nearest airport and take a plane to New Orleans, or Chicago, or Hollywood—but you are not really free to do so if you don't have the money to pay for the ticket. Of what use is it to have a right if you are not able to exercise it?

"Necessitous men are not free men," said President Roosevelt in his message to Congress on January 11, 1944. And 20

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years later, in his address to the 1964 convention of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., echoed that concept in these words:

> Of what advantage is it to the Negro to establish that he can be served in integrated restaurants or accommodated in integrated hotels, if he is bound to the kind of financial servitude which will not allow him to take a vacation, or even take his wife out to dinner? What will it profit him to be able to send his children to an integrated school if the family income is insufficient to buy them school clothes?

Freedom, then, means a lot more than mere absence of restraint. It has a positive aspect, which for the majority of the people, is of deeper significance. Freedom means living life to the fullest—the economic ability to satisfy the needs of the body in regard to adequate food, clothing, and shelter, plus effective opportunity to cultivate the mind, develop one's personality, and assert one's individuality.

This concept of freedom will probably come as a surprise to those who have always had the means to satisfy their desires and develop their faculties. For them, freedom is measured solely in terms of non-interference with their rights—free elections, free speech, free press; for the vast majority of mankind, however, freedom is measured less in terms of rights and more in terms of bread, leisure, security.

It is the failure to understand this fundamental fact which makes the revolutionary upheavals of our time incomprehensible to so many Americans. Let me repeat: I do not, for one moment, minimize the value of free elections, free speech, and free press. These are valuable, essential liberties, of the utmost importance to people who have enough to eat, decent housing, education, and medical care. But they are not of particular urgency to hungry, uneducated, diseased, exploited people. When those of us with full bellies tell the people with empty bellies that what they need most in the world is free elections, they will not listen; they know better, they know that what they need first and foremost is bread, shoes, a school for their children, medical care, adequate clothing, a decent home. All these necessities of life, plus the dignity that goes with their enjoyment is what spells freedom to them.

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Here is a simple test by which you can establish the validity of this broader concept of freedom. Ask yourself these questions:

Is a jobless man who is starving, free?

Is a man in constant fear of losing his job, free?

Is an illiterate ignorant person, shut off from the world of books and culture, free?

Is a talented person, unable to afford the schooling which would help his talent flourish, free?

In capitalist society, only the rich are able to enjoy freedom in its broader sense of abundance, security, leisure. The poor are not free. Nor can they win their freedom under capitalism. The only way to rid society of that invisible dictatorship whose mere existence makes all fine talk of freedom so much nonsense —the dictatorship exercised by the owners of the means of production—is to substitute collective for private ownership; to establish socialism in place of capitalism.

The structure of the capitalist system makes the attainment of genuine freedom impossible; the structure of the socialist system makes genuine freedom possible.

Socialism will not bring perfection. It will not create a paradise. It will not solve all the problems that face mankind. Socialism will solve only those problems which can be solved at this particular stage in the development of man.

The conscious planned development of the commonly-owned productive forces will enable socialist society to attain a far higher level of production than was possible under capitalism. In place of the economic disorder which arises in capitalist society when each separate owner of the means of production does as he pleases when he pleases, the socialist government substitutes order through organized effort and plan. Instead of private production for profit, planned production for use. That a planned socialist society is much more efficient than chaotic capitalism in all matters having to do with man's utilization of his material environment is sufficiently clear in the progress already evident in the Soviet Union.

But economic and technological success is only part of the socialist dream. The great socialists of the past have always thought of the good society as not only rationally planned but also democratically controlled—a society of cooperation and

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brotherhood in which no small group monopolizes power or enjoys special privileges; in which all citizens have the right to be fully informed, to make up their own minds, to dissent and to criticize and, most important of all, to participate actively in making and carrying out the decisions that control their lives.

Judged by this standard the Soviet Union still has most of the road to travel—it is not yet a good society. Though it has made notable advances in recent years, it is still far from democracy.

Many good reasons have been advanced for the lack of democracy in the Soviet Union and it may be that complete democracy will be unobtainable there until the socialist prophesy of the withering away of the State comes true. That was, indeed, Lenin's view: "While the State exists, there can be no freedom; when freedom comes there will be no State." But already the absence of open discussion and debate, the failure to develop democratic institutions and procedures in the Soviet Union have become the target of criticism not only from the Soviet masses, but also from within the top leadership of the Communist international movement. It may be that Togliatti, the leader of the Italian Communist Party, was charting the future in his famous Testament of last winter when he attacked "the regime of restrictions and suppression of democratic and personal freedom introduced by Stalin" and called for a return to "a wide liberty of expression and debate on culture, art, and also on politics."

But there are no guarantees that the desired political freedoms will be added to economic freedom attainable under socialism. On September 6, 1880, the *New York Sun* printed an interview which John Swinton, famous American journalist, had with Karl Marx. The interview ends with these words:

> During an interspace of silence, I interrupted the revolutionist and philosopher in these fateful words: "What is?"
>
> In deep and solemn tone, he replied, "Struggle."
>
> At first it seemed as though I had heard the echo of despair; but peradventure, it was the law of life.

The moral, it seems to me, is plain. First we must fight to win socialism; then we must fight to make it fulfill its promise. In short, struggle never ends. It is the law of life.

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In his brilliant essay, "The Commitment of the Intellectual" my friend, the late Professor Paul Baran, defines an intellectual as "in essence a social critic, a person whose concern is to identify, to analyze, and in this way to help overcome the obstacles barring the way to the attainment of a better, more humane, and more rational social order."

Baran points out that it is not easy for the intellectual to stand up to the pressures brought on him to surrender to the ideology of the ruling class. It takes intellectual courage—much more rare than physical bravery.

There are students in this audience who knew Fritz Pappenheim. They know that he was one of the rare ones—a sweet gentle person, a profound scholar who had the courage to be an intellectual. We honor his memory.

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GUERRILLAS AND "PEASANT REPUBLICS" IN COLOMBIA

BY ADOLFO GILLY

The kidnapping of Oliverio Lara at the end of April is an index of the profound weakness of the Colombian bourgeoisie and oligarchy. Six armed men snatched him from his "hacienda Larandia" and demanded one million pesos ($66,670) in ransom.

Oliverio Lara represents in one individual the highest level of the Colombian landowning oligarchy and industrial bourgeoisie. In Colombian terms, this is like kidnapping a Rockefeller. The abduction came a few weeks after the kidnapping and assassination (because of non-payment of the ransom) of another high-ranking Colombian, Harold Eder, in the culmination of a wave of kidnappings which yielded some millions of dollars for the kidnappers.

Who are the kidnappers? Some say guerrillas; others say bandits. Probably the answer is both. In a country which has been in a state of embryonic civil war for almost 20 years the borderline between these two categories is highly indeterminate. What is certain is that the state and the Colombian ruling classes show their impotence to protect their top representatives physically—one of the most concrete indications that they are losing social authority in the country.

The press reacted with profound but restrained alarm. *El Tiempo* called for calm and for "steady nerves in this hour of trial." The Colombian Society of Agriculturists—the association of large landholders—asked for a state of siege, which was declared in May. A wave of panic spread through the upper level of Colombian society; not only had six men kidnapped one of its members but also it felt totally isolated from the rest of the population. It was not that anyone in Bogotá cared about

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Adolfo Gilly is the author of "Inside the Cuban Revolution" (MR, October, 1964) and "The Guerrilla Movement in Guatemala" (MR, May and June, 1965). The translation from the Spanish is by David A. Lurie.

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Lara's having been kidnapped. With a few variations, the principal comment was: "The kidnappers were stupid to demand only a million pesos." This explains more than anything else the impunity with which kidnappings proliferate in Colombia. The people, accustomed to violence from the top down, see it now as a form of violence from the bottom up. While the people do not identify with the kidnappers, neither do they lend their support to the official repression, carried out as it is by the same armed forces that have repressed them.

When helicopters and soldiers are after the kidnappers, the peasants remember that the same helicopters and soldiers invaded Marquetalia in July last year to finish off the guerrillas. This year they occupied the whole El Pato region, dislodging and evicting the peasants who were cultivating their land, without finding—as always happens with the army—one single guerrilla. The Colombian peasants ask why Oliverio Lara's life should be worth more than Pedro Arteaga's or Fabio Guzmán's or Rafael Murcia's, peasants who were murdered during the occupation of El Pato by the army.

Colombia is governed by a two-party system, established in 1957 after the overthrow of the Rojas Pinilla dictatorship, in which the conservatives and liberals alternate "constitutionally" in the presidency. For the coming period it is a liberal's "turn," the official candidate being Carlos Lleras Restrepo who at the beginning of the year was run out of the University of Bogotá by the students, after an attempt was made to take him as a hostage. In the last parliamentary election the people responded decisively to this "two-party democracy"; the abstention rate was 75 percent. Both facts—the liberal-conservative agreement to share the government and the abstention—epitomize the enormous social weakness of the Colombian oligarchy and bourgeoisie, and their lack of real authority in the country; these facts also point to an approaching catastrophe. As a new indication of the coming crisis, Lleras Restrepo has renounced his candidacy, leaving vacant the leadership of the National Front.

The Ruiz Novoa Movement

In 1964, the acting Minister of War, General Alberto Ruiz Novoa, undertook a military offensive which, according to of-

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ficial propaganda, was to "re-establish national sovereignty in Marquetalia." That is to say, re-establish the state's control over all that region, which at the time was under the power of the guerrillas. The army occupied Marquetalia but was unable to find the guerrillas, who had disappeared in the meantime. Although it was physically possible to establish "national sovereignty" in those sections of the territory occupied by the army, it could never be restored in the most important area: the consciousness of the peasantry, which recognizes instead "guerrilla sovereignty." The army felt and continues to feel the silent, tenacious, and ubiquitous resistance of the peasantry. The most obvious sign of the failure of "Operation Marquetalia"—even though from a physical and military viewpoint it succeeded—was the resignation of Ruiz Novoa, who had been accused of organizing a *coup d'état.*

More important than his resignation was the general's subsequent attitude. He launched a political movement which pretends to furnish an alternative to the two-party system. It appears that this same soldier, who commanded a Colombian expeditionary battalion in the Korean war and who decided to wipe out the guerrillas in 1964, is now convinced that such methods are failing to defend the regime and that "a change is necessary." ("We must change everything, so everything can remain as it is.") Alberto Ruiz Novoa has launched the Democratic National Movement in order to fight the National Front, which unites both liberals and conservatives in the "constitutional" sharing of power. He declares that a "change of structures" is required, without specifying the nature of the change, except for "the establishment of laws to eliminate undue privileges." "We must fight against underdevelopment and bring social justice to all Colombians," he says. He proposes a plan for education and literacy. Invoking the tradition of Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, he styles himself a liberal. And he says that if, in the elections of 1966, "the power of the existing machinery is great enough to prevent the opposition (the 75 percent who abstained in the last election) from winning by democratic means control over the media of mass communications and finances—this means that those who say that violent revolution is the only solution will be proven right."

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To conclude, Ruiz Novoa also addresses himself to the army: "The armed forces cannot remain indifferent to this dilemma nor to the violation of the citizens' rights, because military institutions will be the first to be affected by political, social, and economic unrest which cannot be solved by armed force but only by the establishment of a system of social justice, such as does not exist today, and which the military establishment, as the living power of the nation, has the obligation of favoring for the sake of Colombia."

"What has happened throughout Colombia's history," Ruiz Novoa adds, "is that two sections of the same social and economic elite have contended for power—a struggle without any social content whatsoever." The alternative is a government which can introduce "social justice"; to this end the "National Democratic Movement aspires to unite the discontented, who constitute that 75 percent of the electorate which abstained in the past election."

It is impossible to measure the power of Ruiz Novoa's movement as yet. But its appearance is another symptom of the crisis within the governmental system. The peasant wars, either latent or open, are intensifying this crisis, which exists as a permanent feature of the country. Ruiz Novoa went out to "pacify" the countryside. He returned, himself "pacified" by the peasants, saying, as he does now, that "the situation cannot be settled by the force of arms, but only through the establishment of a just social system which does not exist today." He undoubtedly had a glimpse of the brink on which the whole oligarchical capitalist system in Colombia is teetering. The problem is whether changes can be introduced without at the same time beginning to overthrow the system.

The Guerrillas Come from Afar

Colombia has a guerrilla tradition extending back to the colonial period and the wars for independence. Even today's guerrillas had their origin long ago; ever since 1930-1931, they undertook armed actions in the field to struggle for agrarian reform. In the early 1930's the recently founded Communist Party established a peasant zone under its control in Viotá, where it practically had its own administration, independent of the central state power. Viotá could not be broken from the

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outside. However, it became more bourgeois from within, paralleling the rightward turn of the Communist Party in the Popular Front era. Instead of being inspired by the leadership of the party to extend their movement, the peasants who took the land were encouraged to prosper, many of them becoming rich, thus reducing "Red Viotá" to a memory and the real Viotá to a base for careerism and bureaucratic control. But the struggles of the masses and their victories are never in vain. The "independent" and "self-governing" tradition of Viotá was reborn in the new guerrilla epoch and in the "independent peasant republics" of Marquetalia, El Pato, and Guayabero.

After the assassination of Gaitán in 1948, a period known in Colombia as "the violence" ensued. Actually it was an open eruption of the same peasant wars which had cropped out during the previous years. The guerrilla campaigns took on the character of a real peasant uprising, which spread throughout the country without any central organization nor any apparent definite goal. Most of the guerrillas, grouped in bands under the leadership of peasant chiefs named Capitán Peligro (Captain Danger), Desquite (The Avenger), Charro Negro (Black Horseman), styled themselves liberals and fought against the repressive conservative government headed by Laureano Gómez. There also appeared conservative guerrillas, or counter-guerrillas. Thousands of peasants—aroused by the savage repression of the police who killed, tortured, burned, raped, and plundered the peasant villages in order to intimidate the rebels—took arms and fled to the jungles or mountains, sometimes with their entire families, and became guerrilla fighters. Many of the peasants, with their families and all their belongings, settled in new areas, outside the areas of official repression, and began once more to cultivate the soil, this time under the protection of armed guerrillas. The guerrillas spread all over the country but, not having a central goal, some of them degenerated into banditry and, in order to make a living, extorted payments not only from the landholders but also from peasants adhering to other political factions.

When Rojas Pinilla took power in 1953 through a *coup d'état,* he called for "pacification." It is estimated that 35,000 men surrendered their arms in exchange for guarantees for the

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right to work the land in peace. In some areas these guarantees were respected, but in others their rights were increasingly violated by the police and the army, who took advantage of the surrender of arms. Elsewhere, groups of guerrillas refused to relinquish their rifles and carried on the armed struggle. The overthrow of Rojas Pinilla in 1957 coincided with a new outbreak of "the violence" and armed fighting in the countryside. The frightened ruling oligarchy formed the National Front, thus eliminating its own internecine struggles and avoiding being swept away by the peasant war. But the peasant struggle continued, although this time the whole state and its traditional parties were openly united against it. Besides the traditional liberal guerrillas, entire groups of guerrillas declared they were Communists, or were considered as such. Up to 1963 the civil war had caused from 240,000 to 300,000 deaths, according to different estimates.

However, since 1948 these have not been the only ones to die. After a protracted and gigantic peasant war, the proletarian revolution triumphed in China in 1949. Millions fell, as did hundreds of thousands in the Colombian fields. In 1951, with the support of the Chinese, the Korean revolution repelled and broke the United States invasion. In 1954, the Vietnamese peasant war expelled French imperialism and brought a socialist revolution to victory in North Vietnam. In 1959, the Cuban guerrillas overthrew the Batista dictatorship and paved the way for a socialist revolution. From 1954 to 1961 the Algerian war of liberation expelled French imperialism and started all of Africa on its way to independence. In 1962 guerrilla wars started in Guatemala and Venezuela. In 1963 and 1964 the Vietcong guerrillas dominated the greater part of South Vietnam. The Colombian guerrillas, different in origin and partly different in organization—decentralized, without a program nor a well defined political outlet of their own—nevertheless are based upon the same forces: peasant insurrection, the struggle for land, and the internal motivating forces of any popular armed movement. Under these influences, and as a result of its own experience, the Colombian peasant war has visibly changed its nature. It is now less and less "the violence" and more a guerrilla war, one which assumes ever more organized forms

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and will finally tend to become centralized and to find expression in programs at the national level.

Positions of the Left

Statistical data show that the land in Colombia continues to be distributed more or less in the same proportions as before. Eight per cent of the owners possess 40.22 percent of the arable land, of which scarcely 10 percent is cultivated. At the other end, 1,200,000 small peasants own only 6.88 percent of the arable land.

Even though the figures have not changed, twenty years of guerrilla wars have altered an essential element: the consciousness of the peasant masses. After two decades of scattered but incessant armed struggle and in the midst of a world-shaking revolutionary process, the Colombian peasant is no longer the same as before. In a geographically and economically divided country, where each important region tends to be a land apart, and where the oligarchy has been unable to unify the nation in economic terms (and only on the surface in political terms), the most powerful unifying element has been the peasant consciousness and the permanent state of mobilization. The endless resistance of the countryside bears down upon the cities and determines the political positions of all organizations on the Left.

The organized Colombian Left is not numerically strong. The two large labor unions—CTC and UTC—are dominated by syndicalist, liberal, and conservative bureaucrats. Only in extremely rare cases do they reflect the pressure at the base. The Communist Party, publishing once a week its *Voz Proletaria,* does not lead any important union. On the other hand, the best-known guerrilla chief, Manuel Marulanda (his real name is Pedro Antonio Marín, nicknamed "Sure Shot"), who leads the guerrilla zone of Marquetalia, is a Communist Party member.

A disagreement concerning the guerrillas within the Communist Party developed into a split between a pro-Soviet wing, headed by the Party leadership, and a pro-Chinese wing, to which rallied the Communst Youth. The official leadership supported the thesis of "self-defense," meaning that the function of armed struggle is to defend positions already conquered

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against attacks from the army, but that the solution to the national problem does not issue from guerrilla wars but from political struggle, including legal and parliamentary methods. The other group bases its response on a dictum of Che Guevara: "Guerrilla war is not passive self-defense; it is defense with attack and, from the moment that the question is posed as such, its goal becomes the conquest of political power." (*Estudios de la Juventud,* Colombian Communist Youth magazine, August 1964.)

The Movement of Workers, Students and Peasants, born in 1960 under the inspiration of the Cuban Revolution, agrees with this position even though it does not accept other viewpoints of the pro-Chinese Communists.

It is not easy to know what Marulanda himself thinks. Officially, he accepts the Communist Party line. In practice, he supports the other tendency, applying his own opinions in his area and following his own tactics. Not long ago, his forces assembled the people of Insa, in the Cauca region, organized a meeting, and announced their decision to respond to the army offensive against Marquetalia by extending the guerrillas' radius of action. From time to time rumors circulate in other areas to the effect that "Marulanda's column is coming." Whether true or false, they prove that what happens in Marquetalia becomes a focus of attention. In early October, 1964, Marulanda declared that "today our movement is strong and it has a program of struggle which is demonstrated in the appeal for unity of all democratic and progressive forces to fight for the overthrow of the present government and the installation of an anti-feudal and anti-imperialist revolutionary government."

The Peasant Republics

Marquetalia is the best known of the so-called "Peasant Republics." Their number has increased to almost a dozen in a region of about 3,000 square kilometers in the Departments (States) of Cauca, Huila, and Tolima. Beginning in 1964, the army launched a military offensive against all of them, particularly against Río Chiquito, El Pato, Guayabero, Sumapaz, Tequendama, and even Marquetalia, where it is estimated about 7,000 peasant families live.

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In March of this year the army occupied the El Pato zone. A very unique situation developed when, at the beginning of May, a rumor circulated in Bogotá to the effect that the kidnappers of the landowning industrialist Oliverio Lara had refused to accept ransom but, instead, demanded the army's removal from the El Pato region as the condition of his freedom.

In January, 1965, another politically-organized guerrilla group came into the foreground. On January 10, a detachment of armed men in olive drab uniforms with armbands initialed E.N.L. (National Liberation Army) took over control of Simacota in northeastern Colombia. The guerrillas captured arms and ammunition and executed seven government agents who had murdered peasants. After organizing a meeting of all the town's inhabitants, they withdrew to their base in the mountains. This action, which lasted somewhat more than two hours, affected the whole country and intensified the governmental crisis.

In Colombia there is no one political force centralizing the forces of the "Peasant Republics"—whose existence, though fluid, is nonetheless real—and the various guerrilla columns. It is not the Communist Party, whose policy as expressed in *Voz Proletaria* is not a reflection of the objective struggle for power developed by the guerrillas in an empirical way. It advocates instead utilizing the power emanating from these movements to pressure and influence the legal and parliamentary struggle and negotiations with the different "progressive" tendencies. In short, *Voz Proletaria* advocates a sort of "self-defense" policy. It defends the peasant movements but does not provide them with a national perspective—only a local and partial one on the land question. But, above all, it does not tie its fate to theirs: it employs a variety of outlets and tactics. There is no political organization having authority to speak for the guerrillas, to unite them in outlook on a national scale, and to build a bridge between them and the urban labor movement.

On the other hand, however, the armed peasant movement has given proof of an indestructible vitality. It resists and continues. This persistence and the government's inability to offer solutions to the problems that gave rise to it will necessarily tend to find some means of national expression. Ruiz Novoa's movement is, in a way, an inadvertent reflection of that objective

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need. What organizational form it will take is impossible to predict. But it certainly has no alternative other than to advance in one way or another toward a socialist program which will unite it with the cities and the labor movement, thus following in its own way the same road which the Guatemalans have already traveled.

Two Testimonials

The following two testimonials show on what foundations this necessity is based and how the peasants' movement influences certain groups, amongst them the Catholic Church.

One is given by Monsignor Germán Guzmán—accused of being a "half-guerrilla priest"—in his book *Violence in Colombia*. He says:

> It seems that the regulations [dictated by guerrilla commanders as parallel authorities] were complied with, and that in the wandering groups and displaced communities there arose a great solidarity which practically eliminated certain illegal actions. This is what one of the nuns who worked with the Great Mission of Tolima between July 20 and August 7, 1960, could testify to when describing mountain justice: "The people who obey Brillante and Nerón [guerrilla commanders] have their own law and their own justice. Nobody even so much as steals a chicken, because if he does, he has to replace it personally. Beforehand, he is given a bath at 3 a.m. and made to run around for three hours. Theft does not exist here. This is the way justice is carried out among the guerrillas.

The other testimonial is that of Reverend Camilo Torres Restrepo—accused of being a "half-Communist priest"—at the National Congress of Sociology held in Bogotá in 1963:

> The administration of justice is beginning to be practiced among the guerrillas and even within those groups of peasants who were victims of official persecution. The informal rules and sanctions were military and administrative ways of controlling the peasant population in general and the groups of combatants in particular. The so-called "peasant republics" to which official authority has no access, developed later in Colombia. An administration parallel to the official one was organized within them, with new responsibilities and functions. The recently organized peasant groups not only exert pressure on this informal administra-

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tion, but we are aware of how the pressure of guerrilla groups has a decisive influence on the administration of justice and the replacement of judicial functionaries. Likewise, we know that many others have to respect the opinions of the great regional leaders in charge of the combatant groups. . . . The guerrillas have imposed the discipline demanded by the peasants themselves; they have rendered authority more democratic; and they have given trust and security to our rural communities. We mentioned this when discussing the feeling of inferiority which has disappeared from the peasant areas where the phenomenon of violence has been manifested. All these socio-cultural changes in the peasantry have transformed it into a pressure group demanding a general modification in structures. . . .

In spite of everything, violence has released a social process unforeseen by the ruling classes. It has awakened the peasant's consciousness; it has given him group solidarity, a feeling of superiority and sureness in action; it has opened up possibilities for social improvement and it has institutionalized his aggressiveness, with the result that Colombian peasants begin to prefer the interests of the peasantry to those of the party. This will have, as an effect, the constitution of a socio-economic and political pressure group capable of producing structural change in the way least foreseen and desired by the ruling class. We can say that "the violence" has constituted for Colombia the most important socio-cultural change in the peasant areas since the Spanish conquest.

Camilo Torres is only stating objective facts. In the dynamic world of the present these facts must necessarily appear at the level of ideas and programs, and the discussions in the Colombian Left are an indication that the road is open.

The arms of criticism cannot replace criticism by arms; material power must be overthrown by material power—yet theory, too, becomes material once it conquers the masses.

—Karl Marx

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WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

An Old, Old Booby Trap

Mankind, in the closing months of 1965, has come face to face with a difficult and very dangerous booby trap made from three contradictory materials. The first is greed: the yen to grab and keep and accumulate endlessly. The second is ambition: the desire to be recognized and applauded, to be rich and powerful. The third is aggression: trampling on the rights of others, violating their dignity, exploiting them, tyrannizing over them.

This booby trap is as old as the hills and rivers. Its earliest models were on the market when the first pages of man's history were written. Human beings have been falling into this power-politics booby trap for more than five thousand years. They are falling into it while I write and while you read these lines. Decked out in red, white, and blue, and equipped with up-to-date gimmicks and gimcracks, it occupies the center of the stage today in the Rhineland, Southeast Asia, the Near East, the Caribbean, and Central Africa.

Today, as in the near and distant past, the fools who are edging themselves into the trap make excuses and comfort themselves with rationalizations: "Our honor is at stake!" "Our interests are threatened." "Safety and security demand strong measures."

The booby trap is known at home as The American Way of Life. Abroad it is called Yankee Imperialism.

Chasing Rainbows

Among the 1965 candidates for destruction in the power-politics booby trap, President Johnson is winning an easy first place. With a "great society" as domestic sucker-bait, he is

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shouldering his way into Santo Domingo and bombing his way into Southeast Asia.

What does he want? *Le Monde Diplomatique* writes in its August 1965 issue that the President is searching for "a miraculous formula." I would call it a peaceable formula for aggression. On one side it must meet the demands of the small, insecure nations for self-determination. On the other hand it must open the way for the rich and powerful to add riches to riches and power to power.

Like the blind man in a dark room looking for the black cat that isn't there, the White House, the State Department, the Pentagon, and Wall Street want a friendly way of plundering, murdering, and destroying on neighboring territory.

Continued Aggression

State Department spokesmen would have us believe that North Vietnam is the aggressor in South Vietnam. Aggression is a breach of the United Nations Charter. Such outlawry, even on the part of a non-United Nations member, presumably can be dealt with through United Nations agencies. In any case, discussion of the issue in the United Nations, and possible action by that body, is a logical step for the representatives of any peace-seeking nation.

Without even a nod in the direction of the United Nations, Washington, on February 7, 1965, began bombing North Vietnam, from which (according to White Paper thinking) the manpower and war materials necessary to carry on the Viet Cong guerrilla struggle for independence were coming.

Early in the development of the European Common Market, the French Chief of State demanded the exclusion of Great Britain. Should London have retorted by bombing French channel ports and announcing that the bombing would continue until the French withdrew their objections to Britain's entrance?

North Vietnam is a sovereign state with a stable government. It formulates policies and tries to put them into effect. If North Vietnamese policies displease the Washington government, Washington can make representations, enter protests, demand redress. But by no stretch of international law or practice may the United States send in airplanes, bomb North Viet-

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namese installations, and announce that it will stop bombing when North Vietnamese authorities walk the chalk line under North American direction.

Bombing across frontiers, unless promptly followed by apologies and explanations, under any conditions, is considered an act of war which justifies a response in kind. If every affronted, frustrated state bombed its opposite number as a means of redressing real or imaginary grievances, all international relations would be reduced to a senseless series of destructive air battles.

New Axis in Asia

Indonesia's dramatic exit from the United Nations and Washington's dog-in-the-manger determination to keep People's China out of the world organization, coupled with widespread advances of socialist construction in Soviet Central Asia, Siberia, People's China, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Mongolia, have led to a major development: the formation of an Asian Axis paralleling the Atlantic Community and the emerging French-West German-Spanish Axis in Europe.

Recognition of this fact prompted the *New York Times* to devote much space in its August 26th issue to the Asian Axis. The paper carried a front page article dealing specifically with the new development. It also gave its readers a special Tokyo story on "The Race for Asia."

President Roosevelt hoped for an Asian build-up around a Chiang Kai Shek-dominated China, financed and business-managed from New York and Washington. Chiang's inclusion in the Cairo Conference of 1943 was a move in that direction. Japan's defeat and military occupation in 1945 and Chiang's expulsion from the Asian mainland in 1949 left a huge power vacuum in the Far East.

There were two ways in which this Asian power vacuum might have been filled. Washington, supported by its stepchild (the Atlantic Community) might have committed its vast air, naval, and land fighting forces to the reconquest and reoccupation of Asia. Julius Caesar or Napoleon Bonaparte would have dealt in this fashion with the golden opportunity to inaugurate a new imperial century. Such a policy would have involved a

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continuation or resumption of the 1939-1945 war. At that time only Washington was in an economic, political, and military position to engage in such a major power-politics gamble with any hope of success.

Fatefully, and perhaps fortunately, no iron-fisted world conqueror was on the scene between 1945 and 1950. Roosevelt was dead. A little man from Missouri had stepped gingerly into Roosevelt's big boots. He was followed in the White House by a hesitant, vacilliating, middle-of-the-road general. There was no conquering hero to stride the earth.

Instead of a decisive lunge into Asia, financed, armed, and led by Washington, an entire decade slipped by while the Asian power vacuum waited and beckoned. The Geneva Agreements of 1954 marked the end of French domination in Southeast Asia. Likewise it offered Washington one last chance to jump into the Asian power vacuum. No American leader was shaped in the Julius Caesar-Napoleon Bonaparte mold. Washington did too little and came too late. By the early 1960's the Asians were busy forging their own self-determining axis for a coordinated socialist Asia.

Butter Plus Guns

Discussions of peace and war, which raged in the United States from 1914 to 1918, produced a widely used cliché: "You cannot have guns *and* butter." The cliché is used again in the controversy over the Vietnam War. *U.S. News & World Report* (August 16, 1965) ran an article headed: "Butter Plus Guns; New Boom Ahead."

In the September issue of MR I reminded readers that economists generally agreed that there would be a slow-down, if not a recession, in the second half of 1965 and the early months of 1966.

War build-up in Vietnam has come in the nick of time to replace this slowdown by a new boom. *U.S. News* puts it this way: "Huge new spending programs for welfare—known as 'butter'—had been counted on to keep business in 1966 from a 'high-level stall.' Now there will be added billions of new spending for defense—'guns'—to give a further fillip to business."

Repeatedly I have pointed out that United States business

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is economically bankrupt. Only two thirds of its products are sold to consumers, and the proportion so marketed is decreasing. Increasingly, government is stepping in and becoming the chief customer for United States produced goods and services, thus subsidizing business to the tune of tens of billions each year. Without this subsidy the economy would be losing money and the unemployed would number somewhere between 20 and 25 millions.

Government spending alone keeps United States "free enterprisers" from going broke. Washington's economic advisers, painfully aware of this fact, have urged successive administrations to step up government spending. Truman's Korean War and Eisenhower's forty-billion, ten-year program of highway construction were both designed to bolster the sagging economy. Johnson's Great Society welfare program and his Vietnam venture are part and parcel of the same policy.

United States private enterprise really went on the rocks half a century ago. The drastic depression of the 1890's and the setbacks in 1907 and 1913 marked the end of private enterprise in its "no-government-in-business-and-no-business-in-government" form. The slump which was under way in 1913 was countered by the war demand that began on July 31, 1914. The bankruptcy of private enterprise revealed itself again in 1921-1922. The Great Depression quagmire of 1929-1937 was the norm of free enterprise economy in its monopoly adulthood. The collapse was worldwide. It was covered up by the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931, the Italian War in Ethiopia, the rearmament of Germany by the Nazis after 1933, the Spanish Civil War of 1936, and the outbreak of general war of 1939.

Literally, for the past half century, private enterprise has been saved from open bankruptcy by stepped-up government spending, notably for military purposes.

President Johnson's advisers are quite aware of these facts. The President has made his policies accordingly. His attitude toward the business-government relationship may be summed up in two basic propositions: (1) government will take steps to maintain prosperity and prevent depression; (2) military spending plus welfare spending will do the trick. The war in Asia and the war on poverty are two aspects of huge govern-

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ment subsidies that are covering up the bankruptcy of the private-enterprise economy. *U.S. News* states the case in two sentences: "At this time, Congress is being asked to vote more than 7 billion dollars for spending on 'butter' projects. . . . Now spending for guns is to be on top of that." In the year ahead military spending is expected to rise anywhere from $3 to $10 billion.

Two Ways of Saying the Same Thing

1. The Negative Approach

Morgan Guaranty Trust Company of New York began its monthly summary of business and financial conditions (August 1965): "It is going to be a while before the economic implications of President Johnson's decision to step up the scale of American involvement in Vietnam become fully clear. In effect, the United States is committed to do whatever proves necessary to forestall a Communist take-over of South Vietnam."

2. The Positive Approach

If this statement had been candid, it would have read: "It is already clear that the Vietnam War will add another year of good business and fat dividends to the 1961-1965 prosperity era. In effect, the United States is committed to do whatever is necessary to establish and maintain economic, political, and military control of the resources and peoples of Southeast Asia."

Chit Chat

Letter to the Editor of the *Bangor Daily News,* August 25, 1965: "Just like to say: thank God Goldwater didn't make it. There might have been race riots in the streets and we might be at war in Vietnam."

Wallace H. Nolan

* * *

Bulletin of the German Democratic Peace Movement, July 1965: "Amongst the 192 generals and admirals and the 9,228 staff officers of the West German Bundeswehr there is today not a single one who was not an officer in the Hitlerite Wehrmacht."

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(continued from inside front cover)

MR subscribers (other than those living overseas) have already received the annual MR Associates appeal, and we are glad to say that their early response has been most encouraging. To those readers who get their magazines from the newsstands, we would like to explain that the appeal this year was couched in a tone of urgency which has not characterized earlier appeals. The truth is that we are in serious financial trouble and need your support as never before. This financial crisis (for that is what it is) is, paradoxically, not the result of any kind of retrogression but rather of too-rapid expansion of the book-publishing program of MR Press. Perhaps we should have been conservative in limiting new commitments to what could be financed by actual cash in hand. But we thought the Left in this country needs more, not fewer, good radical books, and we decided to go ahead—and ask for your support in case of need. We are pretty sure that *in the long run* all our new book projects will pay off, but unfortunately bills have to be paid in the short run. We are frankly in a bind and appeal to all readers, whether or not they are subscribers, to help out. If for any reason you don't want to join the Associates, you can still send in an equivalent contribution ($15 and up). If you do want to join the Associates, membership entitles you to tangible benefits: an automatic subscription (or renewal); 50 percent off list price of any MR Press books; receipt of all MR pamphlets free. In addition we are now offering, as a sort of bonus for joining, a free copy of any one of the following clothbound books: Cox, *Capitalism as a System;* Eatherly and Anders, *Burning Conscience;* del Vayo, *China Triumphs;* Sweezy and Huberman, eds., *Paul A. Baran: A Collective Portrait;* Nkrumah, *Consciencism;* Belfrage, *The Man at the Door with the Gun;* Ash, *Marxism and Moral Concepts;* Martinet, *Marxism of Our Time;* Morray, *Pride of State;* Beecher, *Report to the Stockholders and Other Poems;* O'Connor, *Revolution in Seattle;* Frances Kelly, ed., *Review 1.* (Anyone sending in $15 or more can have his choice of one of these titles whether or not he becomes an Associate.)

As for the future, MR's greatest need is not financial contributions, no matter how generous and adequate, but increased circulation and book sales. Only in this way can its educational function be fulfilled. We know that among our readers there are many people with knowledge and experience who could help us to promote the magazine and books. May we earnestly ask any who have ideas which they think would be useful or relevant to get in touch with us as soon as possible?

A reader in Montreal points out that the expression "syndicat de boutique" which was translated as "shop committee" in the English version of Pierre Vallière's article "Quebec: Nationalism and the Working Class" (MR, February 1965, p. 602) actually is the Canadian French equivalent of "company union." We are glad to make the correction.

Have You Joined the MR ASSOCIATES?

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OBSCENE

In the spring of 1962 a young New York publisher named Ralph Ginzburg brought out an elegant new magazine "devoted to the joys of love and sex." Its name was *Eros*. *Eros* was a lavishly printed hard-cover quarterly featuring such long-suppressed masterpieces of art and literature as John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*, Frank Harris's *My Life and Loves*, Mark Twain's *1601*, Robert Burns's *The Merry Muses of Caledonia*, and Edgar Degas's magnificent monotypes for Guy de Maupassant's *Madame Tellier's Brothel*.

Eros was a great and instantaneous success. Art and literary critics all across the country hailed it as a welcome addition to the literature of our time ("It will probably become a status symbol on the coffee tables of our society," said the San Francisco *Chronicle*) and nearly 150,000 Americans purchased subscriptions, despite the fact that its $25-per-year price made it the world's most expensive magazine.

But while *Eros* was kindling the enthusiasm of intellectuals, it was also arousing the deep anxiety of prudes, and it was not long before censors began trying to suppress the magazine. In December, 1962, the Post Office Department hauled Ginzburg into the United States District Court in Philadelphia and charged him with criminal use of the United States Mail on grounds that *Eros* was "obscene."

A trial followed in which more than 70 leaders in the arts and sciences (including Dr. Theodor Reik, Dwight Macdonald, and Nobel Prize-winner Dr. Hermann J. Muller) rallied to Ginzburg's defense. Nevertheless, a Federal judge, sitting without a jury, ruled *Eros* obscene and fined Ginzburg $28,000 and sentenced him to five years in prison. The case is now on appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

Although the *Eros* trial resulted in one of the most dramatic courtroom battles of the century and although the issues it raised rival those of the Scopes Trial, virtually nothing was printed about the case in the American press.

Now, however, the full story of the *Eros* trial will be told, and it will be told by its protagonist, Ralph Ginzburg, in a taut, book-length (35,000-word) narrative entitled "*Eros* on Trial." In it, Mr. Ginzburg reveals which top Government officials made the decision to put *Eros* out of business, why the Post Office selected Philadelphia as the arena for the trial, and why the Supreme Court, in deciding the *Eros* case, may hand down a landmark decision declaring all obscenity statutes unconstitutional and therefore null and void forever. (Mr. Ginzburg's Supreme Court appeal is being supported by the American Civil Liberties Union, the Authors League of America, and 111 leading American artists and intellectuals.)

This moving, suspenseful account of the *Eros* trial—it may well become a classic in the literature of Free Speech—will be published in FACT Magazine as part of a special *Eros* Commemorative Issue. FACT will also present portions of the *Eros* trial transcript (they will *astound* you) and a special section entitled "The Most Beautiful Art from *Eros*." This portfolio of artwork contains reprints of 59 pages of *Eros*'s magnificent paintings, drawings, photographs, poetry, and prose. Included are spreads from "The Erotic Sculpture of India," "The Brothel in Art," "Love in the Bible," "Nudes of Yesterday," "The Animal Love Poems of D. H. Lawrence," and *Eros*'s memorable photographs of the late Marilyn Monroe by Bert Stern.

This special *Eros* Commemorative Issue of FACT is being offered *absolutely free* to all new subscribers to FACT Magazine, a new national bimonthly which specializes in presenting suppressed information and which has been described as "an antidote to the timidity and corruption of the American press."

To obtain your copy of this special *Eros* issue and to enter your FACT subscription, simply *fill* out the coupon below and *mail* it with $7.50 to FACT, 110 W. 40th Street, New York, N. Y. 10018. Since this special *Eros* issue is bound to become a collector's item, we urge you to act at once.

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I enclose $7.50 for a one year subscription to FACT Magazine. I understand that I will receive *free* a copy of FACT's special issue containing a portfolio of the most beautiful artwork, photography, poetry, and prose from the suppressed quarterly *Eros*.

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